

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
VIRGINIA WORKFORCE COUNCIL**

Policy Number:	VWC 01-02
Effective Date:	March 20, 2002
Revision #:	
Revision Date:	
Title:	Workforce Training Access Program and Fund

PURPOSE

To describe the conditions and requirements for implementation of the Workforce Training Access Program and Fund by the Secretary of Finance and the Virginia Workforce Council.

REFERENCES

Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-2669 (A)
Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-2674
Virginia Workforce Council, Vision Statement, March 7, 2001

POLICY STATEMENT

The Virginia Workforce Council's vision is for the Commonwealth to have and promote a well-trained, well-educated, highly skilled and qualified workforce that is actively engaged in lifelong learning. Such a workforce is crucial in attracting and retaining successful businesses and industry to the Commonwealth and will help ensure a desirable quality of life for all Virginians. Additionally, the Council is committed to understanding the needs of employers, workers and job seekers and overseeing the development of responsive programs to meet those needs.

During the 1998 Session, the Virginia General Assembly passed the Workforce Training Access Program and Fund, herein after referred to as the "Program." The Program was created to facilitate the employment of residents of the Commonwealth, to provide a qualified and competent workforce for Virginia's employers and to promote the industrial and economic development of the Commonwealth. The Program establishes workforce training loans for employed Virginians for workforce training courses and programs, which respond to the technology needs of business and industry in Virginia. The Virginia Workforce Council must certify the courses as meeting the technology needs of business and industry.

The Program oversight resides with the Secretary of Finance, with workforce policy decisions made by the Virginia Workforce Council. The local Workforce Investment Boards, in consultation with Technology Councils in their area, will assist the Council in the certification process.

The Council will ensure that the loans are directed towards the diverse needs of business, industry and workers in various regions of the state and consider areas most in need. To the extent possible, the Council shall provide funds first to individuals who are not receiving workforce training through their own company for Council certified courses.

In order to expediently respond to business needs, course length will be restricted to twelve (12) months or less, with a maximum loan amount of \$5,000 for a maximum term not to exceed five years. Low-interest loans shall be made to employed residents of Virginia or to those who are employed in Virginia and whose employers make loan repayments directly by payroll deduction or tuition assistance, before providing for the training needs of other students in such certified courses. No person may receive a workforce training loan or loans that results in an amount in excess of the tuition and required fees for the certified workforce training course or program.

Program results will be monitored by the Virginia Workforce Council on an annual basis to determine: (1) employer and trainee satisfaction; (2) areas of training provided by the Program; (3) wages of individuals before and after training; and (4) percentage of individuals that complete training. The Secretary of Finance and the Council will ensure that the Program is marketed through the national student loan marketing association. Workforce Investment Boards will provide Program status reports as required by the Council.

FUNDING

Funds appropriated for the workforce loans shall be placed in a special nonreverting fund, herein after referred to as the "Fund." Interest earned shall remain in the Fund and funds remaining in the Fund, including interest, at the end of the fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund. The assets of the Fund shall not be expended or otherwise transferred for any other purpose.

The State Treasurer on warrants issued by the Comptroller shall make expenditures from the Fund. The Secretary of Finance shall make such requests to the Treasurer only as a guaranty of payment of workforce training loans made by a national student loan marketing association, with which the Secretary of Finance is authorized to enter into an agreement to originate, fund and service workforce training loans.

The national student loan marketing association shall agree to make available workforce training loans in an aggregate unpaid amount of not less than five times the amount of all cash, cash equivalents, investments, and other assets available in the Program. The agreement to be entered into shall provide for an annual evaluation by such national student loan marketing association and the Secretary of Finance or his designee of the aggregate unpaid amount of loans made available.

The Secretary of Finance or his designee and the Virginia Workforce Council will develop procedures for implementation of the Program. The procedures will clarify eligibility and other financial requirements. Definitions of “technology courses that meet the needs of business and industry” and “employment” will also be included.

RECISIONS:

APPROVED: Michael A. Daniels
Chair, Virginia Workforce Council

M. Coleman Walsh, Jr.
Acting Commissioner, Virginia Employment Commission

DATE: **March 20, 2002**